**SA-GO-YE-WAT-HA - "THE KEEPER AWAKE"**

**This is a historical/biographical work**
**based on the public domain book**
**“Lives Of Famous Indian Chiefs”**
**by Norman B. Wood**
**with edits, arrangement and additional images**
**by Larry W Jones**

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**First edition - 2022**

**Book design by Larry W Jones**

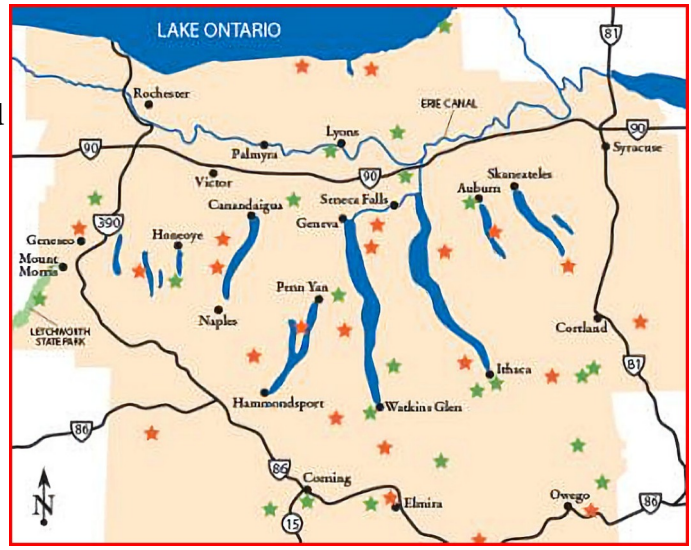
**Published by lulu.com**

**ISBN** – 978-1-387-89854-1

# RED JACKET – SA-GO-YE-WAT-HA- "THE KEEPER AWAKE"

The subject of this sketch was certainly the greatest orator of the Six Nations, and it is doubtful if his equal was ever known among all the American Indians. His birth is supposed to have taken place about the year 1750, under a great tree which formerly stood near the spring of water at Canoga point on the west shore of Cayuga Lake, in Western New York.

His parents were of the Seneca tribe, the most western of the Iroquois confederation, and lived at Can-e-de-sa-ga, a large Indian village on the present site of Geneva.




At the time of his birth, owing to scarcity of game, his parents, with others, were hunting on the west shore of Cayuga Lake. The locality has been purchased by Judge Sackett, of Seneca Falls, who derived the statement here quoted from the great orator himself. When interrogated about his birthplace the sachem would answer, counting on his fingers as he spoke, "One, two, three, four above John Harris," meaning four miles above where Harris kept his ferry across the Cayuga, before the erection of the bridge.

(**Note**) *In 1790 John Harris opened the first tavern at the Cayuga Ferry. It was erected on land owned by the Indians, for it was unlawful to purchase land from the Indians, and it was held on sufferance. The John Harris Tavern was a place of general rendezvous, and it is stated that on the old maps of the Cayuga Reservation all trails from every point of the compass centered at that point.*

The orator, whose eloquence was the pride of the race, and the special glory of the Senecas, owed nothing to the advantages of illustrious descent, but was of humble parentage. He was a Cayuga on his father's side, and the Cayugas claim to have been a thoughtful and far-seeing people. The fact of his possessing wonderful eloquence was never disputed at any time. The name which Red Jacket received in his infancy was O-te-tiana, and signified "Always

Ready." According to the custom of his people, when he became chief he took another—Sa-go-ye-wat-ha,—which means "The Keeper Awake."

But little is known of his history until the campaign of Sullivan, when Red Jacket must have been about twenty-nine years of age.

Tradition says that he was remarkably swift in the chase and possessed a marvelous power of endurance. For these reasons, he was very successful in hunting. On account of his fleetness he was often employed as a messenger or "runner" by his people in his youth, and afterward in a like capacity by the British officers during the Revolution.

According to Mr. Stone, the learned Indian biographist, Sa-go-ye-wat-ha obtained the name of Red Jacket from the following circumstance: "During the War of the Revolution he made himself very useful to the British officers as a messenger. He was doubtless the more so because of his intelligence and gift for oratory.

In return for his services the officers presented the young man with a scarlet jacket, very richly embroidered." One can imagine the immense pride with which the "Young Prince of the Wolf Clan," as his admiring people were accustomed to call him, donned this brilliant garment.

He took such delight in the jacket that he was kept in such garments by the British officers during the Revolution. This peculiar dress became a mark of distinction and gave him the name by which he was afterward best known. Even after the war, when the Americans wished to find a way to his heart, they clothed his back with a red jacket.

It has been almost the universal testimony of books that Red Jacket, the Indian orator, like the two greatest of the ancient world, Demosthenes and Cicero, was a coward. This inference has been drawn very naturally, perhaps, from the fact that he generally, but not always, opposed war and seldom wielded the tomahawk.

But the old men of his nation, who knew him best and the motives from which he acted, deny the charge. Many even asserted that he was brave, though prudent, and not at all lacking in the qualities they admire in a warrior. They assign other reasons for his persistent opposition to war, and maintain that his superior judgment led him to see its consequences to the Indian. In the Revolutionary contest the red men generally enlisted on the side of the British, believing it to be for their interests.

They could not understand anything of the real nature of the controversy of the two rival powers, and were justifiable in studying their own interest alone. In taking the British side the Iroquois were strongly influenced by the Johnsons, the Tory leaders of New York, and their powerful ally, Captain Joseph

Brant, the great war-chief of the Mohawks. But it was all done in spite of the eloquent protest of Red Jacket.

"Let them alone," said the wise man and orator. "Let us remain upon our lands and take care of ourselves. What have the English done for us?" he exclaimed, drawing his proud form to its fullest height and pointing with the zeal of despair toward the winding Mohawk, "that we should become homeless and helpless wanderers for their sakes?"

But his motives were questioned and misunderstood. Some of his own warriors called him a coward and promptly followed Cornplanter and Brant to battle. These two chiefs seemed to have had a contempt for Red Jacket because of his supposed cowardice. They nicknamed him Cow-Killer, and often told with much gusto a story at his expense. This story was to the effect that at the commencement of the Revolutionary War, the young chief, with his usual eloquence, exhorted the Indians to courage, and promised to be with them in the thickest of the fight.

When the battle came off, however, he was missing, having stayed at home to cut up a cow which he had captured. This story, with the speech just quoted in opposition to war, tended to convince many of the Indians that the Seneca sachem was a coward.

(**Note**) *John Abeel III (born between 1732 and 1746–February 18, 1836), known as Gaiänt'wakê (Gyantwachia – "the planter") or Kaiiontwa'kon (Kaintwakon – "By What One Plants") in the Seneca language and thus generally known as Cornplanter, was a Dutch-Seneca war chief and diplomat of the Wolf clan. As a chief warrior, Cornplanter fought in the French and Indian War and the American Revolutionary War.*

*In both wars, the Seneca and three other Iroquois nations were allied with the British. After the war Cornplanter led negotiations with the United States and was a signatory of the Treaty of Fort Stanwix (1784). He helped gain Iroquois neutrality during the Northwest Indian War.*

RED JACKET, OR SA-GO-YE-WAT-HA, "THE KEEPER AWAKE."

CELEBRATED SENECA CHIEF AND ORATOR.

But when the very things he prophesied literally happened, when in the progress of the war, as we have recorded in the life of Brant, Sullivan's army destroyed forty populous towns, with many orchards and fields of golden grain; when the Senecas were driven farther west, and the proud Mohawks across the boundary into Canada, the deluded Indians saw that Red Jacket, the sage, was a true prophet. Had they followed his advice all would have been well, but they refused, and the Mohawks had "become homeless and helpless wanderers" for the sake of the British, who cared nothing for them when the war was over.

At the close of the Revolution, the influence of Red Jacket was restored; for the reason that even his enemies had to concede that he was right, that he opposed war not from cowardice, but because his shrewd mind could see the end from the beginning, and he knew that in any case it must end disastrously for the Indian. He is to be commended for acting with wisdom and prudence. Another sage of old has said: "A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on and are punished." (**Note** Proverbs 22:3)

No one accused Washington of cowardice, when he advised his countrymen to keep neutral and make no entangling alliance with a foreign power. This, in its last analysis, was about the same position taken by Red Jacket. Why, then, should it be assumed that he was a coward?

But there are other positive proofs of Red Jacket's courage. On one occasion the Mohawks challenged the Senecas to a game of ball. The challenge was accepted, and a large number of the Iroquois had gathered to witness the game.

Many valuable articles, such as ornaments, weapons, belts and furs were bet on the result of the game. The stakes were placed under the care of a company of aged Indians and the game was called. The ball was of deerskin; the bats, or rackets, were woven with deerskin thongs. A certain number of players were chosen upon each side. They were entirely nude except a breech-cloth about their loins. Each party had a gate, or two poles, planted in the ground about three rods apart (approx 50 feet). The aim of the players on each side was to drive the ball through their own gate a specified number of times. It took several contests to decide the match. The players, provided with bats, were ranged in opposite lines, and between them stood two picked players, one from either side, who were expected to start the game. Sometimes a pretty Indian girl, very gayly dressed and decked with silver ornaments, ran between the lines until she reached the two leaders in the center, when she would drop the ball between them. The instant it touched the ground each of the two Indians would make a struggle to start the ball toward his own gate.

It was a rule of the game that the ball must not be touched by foot or hand. But a player might strike it with, or catch it on, his racket and run with it to the goal, if he could. But the opposite side would have men stationed to guard against such easy success.

A fierce struggle for the possession of the ball was continually in progress, and players were frequently hurt, sometimes severely. It was usually taken in good part, but at this particular game a Mohawk player struck a Seneca a hard blow with his bat. Instantly the Senecas dropped their bats, took up the stakes that they had laid down in betting, and returned to their own country. Three weeks after Red Jacket and some other chiefs sent a belligerent message to the Mohawks demanding satisfaction for the insult. Brant immediately called a council of his people, and it was decided to recommend a friendly council of both nations to settle the difference. The Senecas consented to this, and the council met. Red Jacket was opposed to a reconciliation. He made a stirring speech, in which he pictured the offense in its blackest light, and was in favor of nothing less than war. But the older Senecas, and among them Cornplanter, who had not yet lost his influence, were opposed to a break between the two nations, and proposed that presents should be made in atonement to the young man who had been injured. The Mohawks consented to this, and the pipe of peace was finally smoked in friendship.

Now, remember, it was Red Jacket who sent the belligerent message to the Mohawks, demanding satisfaction for the injury to the young man, and insult to his tribe. He it was who favored war, as the only way in which it could be wiped out.

**Thayendanegea or Joseph Brant. Mohawk military and political leader.**

In the event of hostilities, he well knew that he and his tribe would be arrayed against the terrible Mohawks, under the command of their great war-chief, Captain Brant, whose name was a terror to white and red foe alike. There was certainly no evidence of cowardice in this transaction. A treaty was made with the Six Nations on the part of the United States at Fort Stanwix, in 1784. General Lafayette was present at this council, and was struck with the eloquence of Red Jacket. The war-chief of the Senecas, Cornplanter, was in favor of peace, while Red Jacket, who was called a coward, used all his eloquence in favor of war.

There are only two ways to account for his action at this time. Either he was a courageous leader, or else he believed the war policy would be the most popular, at least with the Senecas. Red Jacket and the Senecas also took part in the war of 1812. As early as 1810 the orator gave information to the Indian agent of attempts made by Tecumseh, the Prophet, and others, to draw his nation into the great Western combination; but the war of 1812 had scarcely commenced, when the Senecas volunteered their services to their American neighbors. For some time these were rejected, and every exertion was made to induce them to remain neutral. The Indians bore the restraint with an ill grace, but said nothing. At length, in the summer of 1812, the English unadvisedly took possession of Grand Island, in the Niagara River, a valuable territory of the Senecas. This was too much for the pride of such men as Red Jacket and Farmer's Brother. A council was called immediately—the American agent was summoned to attend—and the orator arose and thus addressed him:

"Brother!" said he, after stating the information received, "you have told us we had nothing to do with the war between you and the British. But the war has come to our doors. Our property is seized upon by the British and their Indian friends. It is necessary for us, then, to take up this business. We must defend our property; we must drive the enemy from our soil. If we sit still on our lands, and take no means of redress, the British, following the customs of you white people, will hold them by conquest;and you, if you conquer Canada, will claim them on the same principles, as conquered from the British. Brother, we wish to go with our warriors and drive off these bad people, and take possession of those lands."

The effect of this reasonable declaration, and especially of the manner in which it was made, was such as might be expected. A grand council of the Six Nations came together, and a manifesto, of which the following is a literal translation, according to Thatcher, was issued against the British in Canada, and signed by all the grand councilors of the Confederation:

"We, the chiefs and councilors of the Six Nations of Indians, residing in the State of New York, do hereby proclaim to all the war-chiefs and warriors of the Six Nations, that war is declared on our part against the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada. Therefore, we do hereby command and advise all the war-chiefs to call forth immediately the warriors under them, and put them in motion to protect their rights and liberties, which our brethren, the Americans, are now defending."

(**Note**) *The Iroquois, Haudenosaunee, were known as the Iroquois League and Iroquois Confederacy. The English called them the Five Nations, comprising the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca (listed geographically from east to west). After 1722, the Iroquoian-speaking Tuscarora people from the southeast were accepted into the confederacy, which became known as the Six Nations.*

We regret that no speech of Red Jacket on this memorable occasion is preserved. But his eloquence, and that of his brother chiefs, must have inspired the warriors to great zeal and courage for although the declaration was made quite late in 1812, we find quite a number of them in the battle near Fort George. An official account of this action was given by General Boyd, under date of August 13. The enemy were completely routed, and a number of British Indians (Mohawks) were captured by our allies. "Those," continued the general in his report, "who participated in this contest, particularly the Indians, conducted with great bravery and activity. General Porter volunteered in the affair, and Major Chapin evinced his accustomed zeal and courage. The regulars under Major Cummings, as far as they were engaged, conducted well. The principal chiefs who led the warriors this day were Farmer's Brother, Red Jacket, Little Billy, Pollard, Black Snake, Johnson, Silver Heels, Captain Halftown, Major Henry 0. Ball (Cornplanter's son) and Captain Cold, who was wounded. In a council which was held with them yesterday, they covenanted not to scalp or murder, and I am happy to say that they treated the prisoners with humanity, committed no wanton cruelties on the dead, but obeyed orders, and behaved in a soldier-like manner."

Thatcher says: "We believe all the chiefs here mentioned were Senecas except Captain Cold." In his next bulletin, the General reports, "The bravery and humanity of the Indians were equally conspicuous." Another authority quoted in Nile's "Register" says, "They behaved with great gallantry and betrayed no disposition to violate the restrictions which Boyd had imposed."

"These restrictions," as Thatcher says, "it should be observed in justice to Red Jacket and his brave comrades, had been previously agreed upon at the grand council, and the former probably felt no humiliation in departing in this particular from the usual savagery of his warriors. We have met with no authentic charges against him, either of cruelty or cowardice, and it is well known that he took part in a number of sharply contested engagements."

Is not all this a complete vindication of Red Jacket's courage?

Of the boyhood of this great sachem we know nothing. Like many another he owed his celebrity to the troublous times in which he lived. The powers of the orator can only be exhibited on occasions of great interest; and the mighty intellect of Red Jacket could not have exercised itself upon theology, philosophy, or law, for the Indian was a stranger to all these things. He was, however, a natural logician, and had gifts which, in a white man, would have insured success as a lawyer. One of the first forensic efforts of the young chief was in behalf of the women of his people, who, among the Iroquois, were permitted to exert their influence in all public and important matters. And to this extent, the Six Nations of this period were more civilized than many of the white nations of the twentieth century, including our own.

In the year 1791, when Washington wished to secure the neutrality of the Six Nations, a deputation was sent to treat with them, but was not favorably received, as many of the young chiefs were for war and sided with the British. The women, as is usual, preferred peace, and argued that the land was theirs, for they cultivated and took care of it, and, therefore, had a right to speak concerning the use that should be made of its products. They demanded to be heard on this occasion, and addressed the deputation first themselves in the following words:

"Brother:—The Great Ruler has spared us until another day to talk together; for since you came here from General Washington, you and our uncles, the sachems, have been counseling together. Moreover, your sisters, the women, have taken the same into great consideration, because you and our sachems have said so much about it. Now, that is the reason we have come to say something to you, and to tell you that the Great Ruler hath preserved you, and that you ought to hear and listen to what we women shall speak, as well as the sachems; for we are the owners of this land, AND IT IS OURS! It is we that plant it for our and their use. Hear us, therefore, for we speak things that concern us and our children; and you must not think hard of us while our men shall say more to you, for we have told them."

They then designated Red Jacket as their speaker, and he took up the speech of his clients as follows:

"Brothers from Pennsylvania: You that are sent from General Washington and by the thirteen fires you have been sitting side by side with us every day, and the Great Ruler has appointed us another pleasant day to meet again.

"Now, listen, brothers; you know it has been the request of our head warriors, that we are left to answer for our women who are to conclude what ought to be done by both sachems and warriors. So hear what is their conclusion. The business you come on is very troublesome, and we have been a long time considering it; and now the elder of our women have said that our sachems and warriors must help you, for the good of them and their children, and you tell us the Americans are strong for peace.

"Now, all that has been done for you has been done by our women; the rest will be a hard task for us; for the people at the setting sun are bad people, and you have come in too much haste for such great matters of importance. And now, brothers, you must look when it is light in the morning, until the setting sun, and you must reach your neck over the land to take in all the light you can to show the danger. And these are the words of our women to you, and the sachems and warriors who shall go with you.

"Now, brothers from Pennsylvania and from General Washington, I have told you all I was directed. Make your minds easy, and let us throw all care on the mercy of the Great Keeper, in hopes that he will assist us."

"So," as Minnie Myrtle says, "there was peace instead of war, as there would often be if the voice of women could be heard! and though the Senecas, in revising their laws and customs, have in a measure acceded to the civilized barbarism of treating the opinions of women with contempt, where their interest is equal, they still cannot sign a treaty without the consent of two-thirds of the mothers!"

(**Note**) *Theresa Dyer (May 2, 1845 - May 15, 1882), better known by her pen names, Minnie Myrtle and Minnie Myrtle Miller, was an American author of prose and verse. She was a frequent contributor to the newspapers under her pen name, "Minnie Myrtle" before her marriage to Joaquin Miller, and "Minnie Myrtle Miller" thereafter.*

On another occasion the women sent a message, which Red Jacket delivered for them, saying that they fully concurred in the opinion of their sachems, that the white people had been the cause of all the Indians' distresses. The white people had pressed and squeezed them together, until it gave them great pain at their hearts. One of the white women had told the Indians to repent; and they now, in turn, called on the white people to repent—they having as much need of repentance as the Indians. They, therefore, hoped the pale-faces would repent and wrong the Indians no more, but give back the lands they had taken.

At the termination of the Revolution, the Indians who were the allies of the English were left to take care of themselves as best they could. Though they had fought desperately in their own way, and inflicted every species of suffering on our people, Washington extended to them the hand of friendship and offered them protection. His kindness won him the gratitude of the Indians. He undoubtedly filled a place in their affections never occupied by any other white man, save Roger Williams, or William Penn. His influence over the Indians helps to explain the fact that in all subsequent wars the Senecas were either neutral or loyal to the Americans; proof that the "Father of His Country" was also revered by his red children.

Red Jacket was one of fifty chiefs who visited President Washington at Philadelphia, then the seat of government, in 1792. While there the President presented him with a silver medal, on which Washington, in military uniform, was represented as handing a long peace-pipe to an Indian chief with a scalp lock decorated with plumes on the top of his head, while a white man was plowing with a yoke of oxen in the background.

This last figure was probably intended as a hint for the Indians to abandon war and the chase, and adopt the peaceful pursuits of agriculture. On the reverse side was the eagle, and motto of our country, "E Pluribus Unum." Indians prefer ornaments of silver to those of gold, for they are more becoming to their red skin. Red Jacket prized this medal very highly. He wore it on all state occasions. Nevertheless, sad to relate, it is stated that the beloved medal was more than once in pawn for whisky.

The medal in question was quite large. The exact dimensions were seven inches long, by five broad. The last heard of the medal was in 1867, when it was in possession of Brigadier-General Parker, of Grant's staff, who was at that time chief sachem of the Six Nations.

While in Philadelphia, each member of the deputation of chiefs received from General Knox, on the part of the Government, a military uniform such, as was worn by the officers, together with a cocked hat. When Red Jacket's suit was offered him he sent back word to General Knox that he could not consistently wear such a garb, as he was not a war-chief, and requested that a different suit might be given him, more suitable to his station.

But when the plain suit was brought to him, he declined giving up the regimentals, coolly remarking that though as a sachem he could not wear a military uniform in time of peace, yet in time of war the sachem joined the warriors, and he would therefore keep it till war broke out, when he could assume a military dress with propriety.

On one occasion, being invited with several of his people to dine at the home of an officer, he ate very heartily of several kinds of meat; and seeing the surprise of the host, he remarked that he belonged to the Wolf Clan, and "wolves were always fond of meat."

About the year 1790, a council was held on the shore of Lake Canandaigua to negotiate a purchase of land from the Indians. After two days spent in discussing the terms, a treaty was agreed upon, and only needed the formality of a signature to make it complete, when Red Jacket, who had not yet been heard, arose to speak. An eye-witness thus describes the scene: "With the grace and dignity of a Roman Senator, he drew his blanket around him, and with a piercing eye surveyed the multitude. All was hushed; nothing interposed to break the silence, save the gentle rustle of the tree-tops, under whose shade they were gathered.

After a long and solemn, but not unmeaning pause, he commenced his speech in a low voice and concise style. Rising gradually with the subject, he depicted the primitive simplicity and happiness of his nation, and the wrongs they had sustained from the exploitation of white men, with such bold but faithful eloquence that every auditor was soon roused to vengeance or melted into tears. The effect was inexpressible. But ere the emotions of admiration and sympathy had subsided, the white men became alarmed. They were in the heart of an Indian country, surrounded by more than ten times their number, who were inflamed by the remembrance of their injuries and excited to indignation by the eloquence of a favorite chief.

Appalled and terrified, the white men cast a cheerless gaze upon the hordes around them. A nod from the chiefs might be the onset of destruction. At this portentous moment, Farmer's Brother interposed. He replied not to his brother chief, but with wisdom truly aboriginal, he caused a cessation of the council, introduced good cheer, commended the eloquence of Red Jacket, and before the meeting had reassembled, with the aid of other prudent chiefs, he had moderated the fury of his nation to a more positive view of the question before them."

The fame of his great eloquence gained Red Jacket a powerful influence, not only in his own tribe but among all the Six Nations of Indians. "I am an orator; I was born an orator," was his boastful declaration; and to all future generations his name will descend enrolled on the list with Demosthenes and Cicero in ancient, and Pitt, Henry or Webster in modern times; and though a Pagan and belonging to a rude, uncultured race, his vices were no greater than those of men who lived all their lives under so-called Christian influences.

He strenuously opposed every effort to introduce white man’s religion among his people, for he could not understand how it could be so valuable or necessary, when he saw how little it influenced the conduct of white men and the wrongs they inflicted in the name of their God upon the red man. He could not make the distinction between those who possessed religion and those who merely professed it; and as he came in contact with very few who walked uprightly, he naturally concluded that a religion which did no more for its

followers was not worth adopting. He believed the Great Spirit had formed the red and white man distinct; that they could no more be of one creed than one color; and when the wars were over and there was nothing more for them to do, he wished his people to be separated entirely from white men, and return as much as possible to their old customs.

He saw his people wasting away before the pale-faces; as he once said in a speech before a great assemblage: "We stand a small island in the bosom of the great waters. We are encircled—we are encompassed. The Evil Spirit rides upon the blast, and the waters are disturbed. They rise, they press upon us, and the waves once settled over us, we disappear for ever. Who, then, lives to mourn us? None! What prevents our extermination? Nothing! We are mingled with the common elements."

From all accounts, the first missionaries sent among the Senecas were not very judicious, and did not take the wisest course to make their religion acceptable to any people, and especially to a wronged and outraged race. In 1805 a young missionary by the name of Cram was sent into the country of the Six Nations. A council was called to consider whether to receive him, and after he had made an introductory speech, Red Jacket made the following reply:

"Friend and Brother: It was the will of the Great Spirit that we should meet together this day. He orders all things, and has given us a fine day for our council. He has taken his garment from before the sun and caused it to shine with brightness upon us. For all these things we thank the Great Ruler, and Him only!

"Brother, this council-fire was kindled by you. It was, at your request that we came together at this time. We have listened with joy to what you have said. You requested us to speak our minds freely. This gives us great joy, for we now consider that we stand upright before you and can speak what we think. All have heard your voice and can speak to you as one man. Our minds are agreed.

"Brother, listen to what we say. There was a time when our forefathers owned this great island. Their seats extended from the rising to the setting sun. The Great Spirit had made it for the use of Indians. He had created the buffalo, the deer and other animals for food. He had made the bear and the beaver. Their skins served us for clothing. He had scattered them over the country and taught us how to take them. He had caused the earth to produce corn for bread. All this he had done for his red children because he loved them. If we had some disputes about our hunting-ground, they were generally settled without the shedding of much blood. But an evil day came upon us. Your forefathers crossed the great water and landed upon this island. Their numbers were small. They found us friends and not enemies.

They told us they had fled from their own country on account of wicked men, and had come here to enjoy their religion. They asked for a small seat. We took pity on them and granted their request, and they sat down amongst us. We gave them corn and meat; they gave us poison (rum) in return.

"The white people, brother, had now found our country. Tidings were carried back, and more came amongst us. Yet we did not fear them. We took them to be friends. They called us brothers; we believed them, and gave them a larger seat. At length their numbers had greatly increased. They wanted more land; they wanted our country. Our eyes were opened, and our minds became uneasy. Wars took place. Indians were hired to fight against Indians, and many of our people were destroyed. They also brought strong liquor amongst us. It was strong and powerful and has slain thousands.

"Brother, our seats were once large, and yours were small. You have now become a great people, and we have scarcely a place left to spread our blankets. You have got our country, but are not satisfied you want to force your religion upon us.

"Brother, continue to listen. You say that you are sent to instruct us how to worship the Great Spirit agreeable to his mind; and if we do not take hold of the religion which you white people teach, we shall be unhappy hereafter. You say that you are right, and we are lost. How do we know this to be true? We understand that your religion is written in a book. If it was intended for us as well as you, why has not the Great Spirit given to us—and not only to us, but to our forefathers—the knowledge of that book, with the means of understanding it rightly? We only know what you tell us about it. How shall we know when to believe, being so often deceived by the white people's religion?

"Brother, you say there is but one way to worship and serve the Great Spirit. If there is but one religion, why do you white people differ so much about it? Why not all agree, as you can all read the book? "Brother, we do not understand these things. We are told that your religion was given to your forefathers, and has been handed down from father to son. We, also, have a religion which was given to our forefathers, and has been handed down to us, their children. We worship in that way. It teaches us to be thankful for all the favors we receive; to love each other, and be united. We never quarrel about religion, because it is a matter which concerns each man and the Great Spirit.

"Brother, we do not wish to destroy your religion or take it from you; we only want to enjoy our own.

"Brother, we have been told that you have been preaching to the white people in this place. These people are our neighbors. We are acquainted with them. We will wait a little while and see what effect your preaching has upon them. If we find it does them good, makes them honest and less disposed to cheat Indians, we will consider again of what you have said.

"Brother, you have now heard our talk, and this is all we have to say at present. As we are going to part, we will come and take you by the hand, and hope the Great Spirit will protect you on your journey, and return you safely to your friends." According to the suggestion of their orator, the Indians moved forward to shake hands with the missionary; but he refused, saying, "There was no fellowship between the religion of God and the Devil." Yet the Indians smiled and retired peacefully. At another time Red Jacket said, referring to this same unwise missionary: "The white people were not content with the wrongs they had done his people, but wanted to cram their doctrines down their throats."

The great chief could never be induced to look upon so-called Christianity with favor. But it was the pagan white people, with whom he came in contact, who poisoned his mind, and prejudiced him against the missionaries and their religion. They, knowing that the missionaries were the true friends of the Indian, and understood their own evil machinations, wished to banish them from the reservations. Red Jacket lost ten or eleven children by consumption (tuberculosis), the grim destroyer of so many of all races. A lady once asked him whether he had any children living. "Red Jacket was once a great man, and in favor with the Great Spirit," sorrowfully answered the chief. "He was a lofty pine among the smaller trees of the forest; but after years of glory he degraded himself by drinking the fire-water of the white man. The Great Spirit has looked upon him in anger and his lightning has stripped the pine of its branches, and left standing only the scarred trunk dead at the top."

Had he hated the white men sufficiently to resist their temptations, he might have been the glory and the savior of his people. The word which in Seneca is used to express strong drink very truly and emphatically describes it as "the mind destroyer." This was its office, and if the noble mind of Red Jacket had not been partly destroyed by its agency, he would have seen clearly through the dark plots of his enemies, and been able to counter-plot to their destruction and thus rescued his people from the grasp of their pursuers. We find no evidence that he was addicted to any other debasing vice except intemperance, while his life exemplified many ennobling virtues. He had an intuitive perception of propriety, as was observed by an incident which occurred while a white gentleman was traveling with a party of Indian chiefs and their interpreter. Red Jacket was one of the party, but he was uniformly grave. The others were much inclined to merriment, and during an evening, when they were gathered around the fire in a log cabin, the mirth was so great and the conversation so jocular, that Red Jacket was afraid the stranger, who could not understand their language, would think himself treated with impoliteness, and infer that their sport was at his expense.

He evidently enjoyed their happiness, though he took no part, but after a while he spoke to Mr. Parish, the interpreter, and requested him to repeat a few words to Mr. Hospres, which were as follows:

"We have been made uncomfortable by the storm; we are now warm and comfortable; it has caused us to feel cheerful and merry; but I hope our friend who is traveling with us will not be hurt at this merriment, or suppose that we are taking advantage of his ignorance of our language to make him in any manner the subject of mirth." On being assured that no such suspicion could be entertained of the honorable men who were present, they resumed their mirth and Red Jacket his gravity.

When Lafayette visited Buffalo in 1825, among those who thronged to pay their respects was Red Jacket. When the chief was introduced to Lafayette he said: "Do you remember being at the treaty of peace with the Six Nations at Fort Stanwix?" "Yes," answered the general, "I have not forgotten that great council. By the way, what has become of that young chief who opposed so eloquently the burying of the tomahawk?" "He is before you," said Red Jacket.

"Time has worked great changes upon us both," said Lafayette, "Ah," replied the chief, "time has not been so severe upon you as it has upon me. It has left you a fresh countenance and hair to cover your head; while to me—behold!" The chief pulled a handkerchief from his head and disclosed its baldness. But Lafayette did not leave him to think thus harshly of time but proved to him that the ravages had been nearly the same upon both, by removing a wig and exposing a head almost as bald as the chief's; upon which he remarked, with much pleasantry, that a scalp from some bystander would renew his youth in the same manner!

Red Jacket pretended to understand no language but his own, and entertained a great dislike for English. He would not reply to any of Lafayette's questions until his interpreter had translated them into Seneca. Levasseur states that in his conference with Lafayette, he evidently comprehended everything uttered in his presence, while he would speak only Indian; and that his former high opinion of the general seemed to be much increased by a few chance-medley Seneca words, which the latter had the good fortune to remember, and the courtesy to repeat.

Thatcher informs us that on another occasion the notorious fanatic, Jemima Wilkenson, while trying to make proselytes, invited the Senecas to a conference. This strange woman professed to be the world's Savior at his second appearance upon earth, and was then living in fine style in the western part of New York State with her dupes. Red Jacket attended the council with his people and listened patiently to the end of a long address. Most of it he probably understood, but instead of replying to her argument in detail, he laid the axe at the root of her authority. Having risen very gravely and spoken a few words in Seneca, he noticed her inquire what he was talking about? "Ha!" He exclaimed with an arch look—"she inspired—she Jesus Christ—and not know indian?" The solidity of her pretensions was at once decided adversely, in the minds of at least the heathen part of her audience.

The gifted sachem on one occasion used the following figurative language, in speaking of the enchroachments of the white people:

"We first knew you a feeble plant which wanted a little earth whereon to grow. We gave it you and afterward, when we could have trod you under our feet, we watered and protected you; and now you have grown to be a mighty tree, whose top reaches the clouds, and whose branches overspread the whole land, whilst we, who were the tall pine of the forest, have become a feeble plant and need your protection.

"When you first came here, you clung around our knee and called us father; we took you by the hand and called you brothers. You have grown greater than we, so that we can no longer reach up to your hand; but we wish to cling around your knee and be called your children." Is not this at once beautiful and pathetic? But Sa-go-ye-wat-ha could be sarcastic, as well as pathetic; in fact he ran the whole gamut, and was deficient in nothing essential to eloquence. Minnie Myrtle, in her book. "The Iroquois," relates the following incident:

"A young French nobleman visited Buffalo on one occasion, and having heard much of the fame of Red Jacket, sent him word that he wished to see him, and invited him to come the next day. Red Jacket received the message, and affected great contempt, saying: 'Tell the young man if he wishes to visit the old chief he will find him with his nation, where other strangers pay their respects to him, and Red Jacket will be glad to see him.' The count sent back word that he had taken a long journey and was fatigued; that he had come all the way from France to see the great orator of the Seneca nation, and hoped he would not refuse to meet him at Buffalo. 'Tell him,' said the sarcastic chief, 'that, having come so far to see me, it is strange he should stop within seven miles of my lodge.' So the young Frenchman was obliged to seek him in his wigwam; after which he consented to dine with the count at Buffalo, and was pronounced by him a greater wonder than Niagara Falls itself."

On another occasion he was visited by a gentleman who talked incessantly and to little purpose, and who would go very near the person he was addressing and chatter about as intelligibly as a magpie. Red Jacket, receiving the message that a stranger wished to see him, dressed himself with great care, and came forth in all his dignity. One glance of his keen eye was sufficient for him to understand the character of his guest, and listening a few moments with contempt in all his features, he then went close to him and exclaimed, "Cha! cha! cha!" as fast as he could speak, and turned on his heel to his own cabin "as straight as an Indian," nor deigned to look behind him while in sight of the house occupied by the loquacious stranger, who stood for once speechless!

Like other great orators, he had his full share of vanity. He was fully aware of his importance, and disposed to make others aware of it. Colonel Pickering was often employed by the government to negotiate treaties, and would take down the speeches on the occasion in writing. At one time, when Red Jacket was the orator, he thought he would note the words of the interpreter whilst the chief was himself speaking. He immediately paused, and on being requested to proceed, said, "No, not whilst you hold down your head." "Why can you not speak whilst I write?" "Because, if you look me in the eye, you can tell whether I tell you the truth."

At another time he turned his head to speak to a third person, when Red Jacket very haughtily rebuked him, saying, "When a Seneca speaks he ought to be listened to with attention from one end of this great island to the other."

When he returned from Philadelphia, he was in the habit of using his oratorical powers to embellish the manner of his reception, and would collect around him the chiefs and people of his nation, and, dressed in his uniform, with the cocked hat under his arm, would personify the President, and bow to all present as if they were the company in the great saloon, imitating the manners and gestures of the original with true grace and dignity, and then entertain his audience with the compliments and attentions which had been bestowed upon him.

When invited to dine or be present at any social function among white people, he conformed with wonderful tact to the customs to which he was a stranger, never manifesting any surprise or asking any questions till he could consult some friend whose ridicule he did not fear. He once told a gentleman that when he dined with President Washington, a man ran off with his knife and fork every now and then and returned with others. "Now," said Red Jacket, "what was that for?" The gentleman told him that there were a great many kinds of dishes, each cooked in a different manner, and that the plates, knives and forks were changed every time a new dish was brought on.

"Ah," said Red Jacket thoughtfully, "is that it? You must then suppose that the plates and knives and forks retain the taste of the cookery?" "Yes."

"Have you then," demanded the chief, "any method by which you can change your palates every time you change your plate? For I think the taste would remain on the palate longer than it would on the plate."

"We are in the habit of washing that away by drinking wine," answered the gentleman.

"Ah," said Red Jacket, "now I understand it. I was persuaded that so general a custom among you must be founded in reason, and I only regret that when I was in Philadelphia I did not understand it. The moment the man went off with my plate I would have drunk wine until he brought me another; for although I am fond of eating, I am more so of drinking."

Red Jacket was extremely fond of sugar. He was once at the table of Captain Jones, the interpreter. Mrs. Jones handed him his coffee without sugar, for a joke. "My son," said the chief, looking at the captain severely, "do you allow your squaw thus to trifle with your father?" The children giggled. "And do you allow your children to make sport of their chief?" added Red Jacket. Apologies were made and the sugar-bowl was handed to the offended chief. He filled his cup to the brim with sugar and ate it out by the spoonful with the utmost gravity.

Eggleston informs us that, "Red Jacket could see no justice in the white man's court of law. An Indian who had broken in to a house and stolen some small article of value was indicted for burglary. Red Jacket made a long speech in court in his defense. But the Indian was sentenced to imprisonment for life, much to the orator's disgust. After the proceedings were over Red Jacket left the courthouse in company with the lawyers. Across the street was the sign of a printing-office with the arms of the State, representing Liberty and Justice. Red Jacket stopped and pointed to the sign.

"What him call?" demanded the chief. "Liberty," answered the bystanders. "Ugh!" said the sachem. "What him call?" pointing to the other figure upon the sign. "Justice," was the answer. "Where him live now?" inquired the chief.

Red Jacket was one day met going the opposite direction from an execution to which everybody was crowding. He was asked why he, too, did not go. "Fools enough there already. Battle is the place to see men die," he answered. Although fond of good things, Red Jacket had a great contempt for a sensualist. When asked his opinion of a chief appropriately named Hot Bread, who was known to be indolent and gluttonous, he exclaimed, "Waugh! big man here (laying his hand upon his abdomen), but very small man here," bringing the palm of his hand with significant emphasis across his forehead.

For a long time the great chief refused to sit for his portrait, though often asked to do so. "When Red Jacket dies," he would say, "all that belongs to him shall die too." But at length an appeal to his vanity availed, and on being assured that his picture was wanted to hang with those of Washington and Jefferson, and other great men in the National Galleries, he consented; and having once broken his resolution, no longer resisted, and was painted by several artists. The one by Weir is considered best, and was taken during a visit of the chief to New York, in 1828, at the request of Dr. Francis. He dressed himself with great care in the costume he thought most becoming and appropriate, decorated with his brilliant war-dress, his tomahawk, and Washington medal. He then seated himself in a large arm-chair, while around him groups of Indians were reclining upon the floor. He was more than seventy years of age at the time, but tall, erect and firm, though with many of the traces of time and dissipation upon his form and countenance.

He manifested great pleasure as the outlines of the picture were filled up, and especially when his favorite medal came out in full relief; and when the picture was finished, started to his feet and clasped the hand of the artist, exclaiming, "Good! good!"

One who knew him remarks, "That his characteristics are preserved to admiration, and his majestic front exhibits an attitude surpassing every other I have ever seen of the human skull." Mr. Stone, in his "Life of Red Jacket," gives an account of an interview between that chief and Rev. Dr. Breckenridge, which took place at the residence of General Porter, Black Rock, New York, in 1821.

General Porter's wife was a sister to Dr. Breckenridge, and he was visiting them at the time. Several chiefs, including Red Jacket, were invited to dine with the general and meet his kinsmen. "On the appointed day," wrote Dr. Breckenridge, "they made their appearance in due form, headed by Red Jacket, to the number of eight or ten besides himself. He wore a blue dress, the upper garment cut after the fashion of a hunting shirt, with blue leggings, a red jacket and a girdle of red about his waist. I have seldom seen a more dignified or noble looking body of men than the entire group.

"After the introduction was over, and the object of their invitation stated, Red Jacket turned to me familiarly and asked: 'What are you? You say you are not a government agent; are you a gambler (meaning a land speculator), or a black-coat (clergyman), or what are you?' "I answered, 'I am yet too young a man to engage in any profession; but I hope some of these days to be a black-coat.' "He lifted up his hands, accompanied by his eyes, in a most expressive way; and though not a word was uttered, every one fully understood that he very distinctly expressed the sentiment, 'What a fool!' I commanded my countenance and seeming not to have observed him, proceeded to tell him something of our colleges and other institutions."

It was during this interview that the objects of speculators were so explained to him that he understood their evil designs; and the true nature of the missionary enterprise was made clear to his comprehension, so that his enmity was never afterward so bitter. When assured that by the course he was pursuing, he was doing more than any one else to break up and drive away his people, and that the effect of the teachings of the missionaries was to preserve them, he grasped the hand of the speaker and said: "If this is so it is new to me, and I will lay it up in my mind," pointing to his noble forehead, "and talk of it to the chiefs and the people."

Dr. Breckenridge continues: "Red Jacket was about sixty years old at this time, and had a weather-beaten look, which age, and more than all, intemperance, had produced; but his general appearance was striking, and his face noble. His lofty and capacious forehead, his piercing black eye, his gently curved lips, fine cheek and slightly aquiline nose—all marked a great man; and as

sustained and expressed by his dignified air, made a deep impression on all who saw him. All these features became doubly expressive, when his mind and body were set in motion by the effort of speaking—if effort that may be called which flowed like a stream from his lips. I saw him in the wane of life, and heard him only in private, and through a stupid and careless interpreter. Yet, notwithstanding these disadvantages, he was one of the greatest and most eloquent orators I ever knew. His cadence was measured, and yet very musical; and when excited he would spring to his feet, elevate his head, expand his arms and utter with indescribable effect of manner and tone, some of his noblest thoughts."

General Porter speaks of him as a man endowed with great intellectual powers, and who, as an orator, was not only unsurpassed, but unequaled by any of his contemporaries. Although those who were ignorant of his language could not fully appreciate the force and beauty of his speeches, when received through the medium of an interpreter—generally coarse and clumsy—yet such was the peculiar gracefulness of his person, attitudes and action, and the mellow tones of his Seneca dialect, and such the astonishing effects produced on that part of the auditory who did fully understand him, and whose souls appeared to be engrossed and borne away by the orator, that he was listened to by all with perfect delight. His figures were frequently so sublime, so apposite and so beautiful that the interpreter often said the English language was not rich enough to allow of doing him justice.

Another gentleman says: "It is evident that the best translations of Indian speeches must fail to express the beauty and sublimity of the originals—especially of such an original as Red Jacket. It has been my good fortune to hear him a few times, but only in late years, when his powers were enfeebled by age and intemperance; but I shall never forget the impression made on me the first time I saw him in council. The English language has no figures to convey the true meaning of the original, but though coming through the medium of an illiterate interpreter, I saw the dismembered parts of a splendid oration."

Through the machinations of his great rival, Cornplanter, Red Jacket was once accused of being a wizard, and actually tried for witchcraft. Very likely he was accused of spitting fire at night or some other wizard's performance. At any rate Red Jacket arose and made his own defense. Eggleston says: "For three hours he spoke with the most wonderful eloquence, moving the Indians in spite of themselves. They were divided. A bare majority was in favor of Red Jacket and his life was saved." We question whether his life was actually in any danger, even had the decision gone against him, for the reason that Red Jacket had a great many white friends, and they would certainly have interfered in his behalf, as they did in the case of other Indians of less prominence accused of witchcraft at the same time.

Near the close of his life Red Jacket was formally deposed by twenty-six chiefs of his tribe. This was due partly to the jealousy of rival chiefs, but mainly because of his opposition to the so-called Christian party, and on account of his intemperate habits.

But Red Jacket was not yet prepared to submit patiently to such degradation, especially when he knew so well the true motives of those who effected it. Nor was he by any means so much under the control of his bad habits as not to feel occasionally, perhaps generally, both the consciousness of his power and the sting of shame. "It shall not be said of me" thought the old orator, with a gleam of a fiery soul in his eye—"It shall not be said that Sa-go-ye-wat-ha lived in insignificance and died in dishonor. Am I too feeble to avenge myself of my enemies? Am I not as I have been?" In fine, he roused himself to a great effort. Representations were made to the neighboring tribes—for he knew too well the hopelessness of a movement confined to his own—and only a month had elapsed since his deposition, when a grand council of the chiefs of the Six Nations assembled together at the upper council-house of the Seneca village reservation.

The document of the so-called Christian party was read, and then Half-Town rose, and, in behalf of the Seneca Indians, said there was but one voice in his nation, among the common people, and that was of general indignation at contumely cast on so great a man as Red Jacket. Several other chiefs addressed the council to the same, effect. The condemned orator rose slowly, as if grieved and humiliated, but yet with his ancient air of command.

"My Brothers," he said after a solemn pause, "you have this day been correctly informed of an attempt to make me sit down and throw off the authority of a chief, by twenty-six misguided chiefs of my nation. You have heard the statements of my associates in council, and their explanations of the foolish charges brought against me. I have taken the legal and proper way to meet these charges. It is the only way in which I could notice them. Charges which I despise, and which nothing would induce me to notice but the concern which many respected chiefs of my nation feel in the character of their aged comrade. Were it otherwise, I should not be before you. I would fold my arms and sit quietly under these ridiculous slanders.

"The so-called Christian party have not even proceeded legally, according to our usages, to put me down. Ah! it grieves my heart, when I look around me and see the situation of my people—in old-time united and powerful, now divided and feeble. I feel sorry for my nation. When I am gone to the other world—when the Great Spirit calls me away—who among my people can take my place? Many years have I guided the nation."

Here he introduced some artful observations on the origin of the attack upon him. He then alluded to the course taken by the Christians, as ruinous and disgraceful, especially in their abandonment of the religion of their fathers,

and their sacrifices, for paltry considerations, of the land given them by the Great Spirit. As for the "Black-Coats," Mr. Calhoun had told him at Washington, four years before, that the Indians must treat with them as they thought proper; the Government would not interfere. "I will not consent," he concluded, shrewdly identifying his disgrace with his opposition to the Christians, "I will not consent silently to be trampled under foot. As long as I can raise my voice, I will oppose such measures. As long as I can stand in my moccasins, I will do all that I can for my nation." It is scarcely necessary to add that the result of the conference was the triumphant restoration of the orator to his former rank.

In a council which was held with the Senecas by General Tompkins, of New York, a discussion arose concerning some point in a treaty made several years before. The agent stated one thing and Red Jacket another, insisting that he was correct. He was answered that it was written on paper, in the record of that treaty, and must be so.

"The paper then tells a lie," said the orator, "for I have it written here (placing his hand upon his brow). You Yankees are born with a feather between your fingers, but your paper does not speak the truth. The Indian keeps his knowledge here this is the book the Great Spirit has given him and it does not lie." On consulting the documents more particularly, it was found that the Indian record was, indeed, the most correct!

Red Jacket's early youth was spent in the beautiful valley of the Genesee; there were his favorite hunting grounds, and there his memory loved to linger. During the strife of wars and the more bitter strife of treaties, he had indulged very little in his favorite pastime; and when a day of comparative quiet came, he, in company with a friend, took his gun and went forth to enjoy one more hunt in this favored region. They had gone but a short distance, however, when a clearing opened before them. With a contemptuous sneer, the old man turned aside and wandered in another direction. In a little while he came to another, and looking over a fence, he saw a white man holding a plow, which was turning up the earth in dark furrows over a large field. Again he turned sadly away, and plunged deeper in the forest, but soon another open field presented itself and though he had been all his life oppressed with the woes of his people, he now for the first time sat down and wept. There was no longer any hope—they had wasted away.

A gentleman who knew Red Jacket intimately for half a century, says: "He was the most graceful public speaker I ever heard. His stature was above the middle size; his eyes fine, and expressive of the intellect which gave them fire; he was fluent without being too rapid; and dignified and stately, without rigidity. When he arose, he would turn toward the Indians and ask their attention to what he was about to say in behalf of the Commissioner of the

United States. He would then turn toward the Commissioner, and with a slight but dignified inclination of the head, proceed."

Red Jacket visited the Atlantic cities repeatedly, and for the last time as late as the spring of 1829. He was, on these occasions, and especially on the latter, the object of no little curiosity and attention. He enjoyed both, and was particularly careful to demean himself in a manner suited to the dignity of his rank and reputation.

One of the Boston papers contained the following mention of his visit to that city: "Red Jacket.—This celebrated Indian chief, who has recently attracted so much attention at New York and the Southern cities, has arrived in this city, and has accepted an invitation of the Superintendent to visit the New England Museum this evening, March 21, in his full Indian costume, attended by Captain Johnson, his interpreter, by whom those who wish it can be introduced and hold conversation with him." Boston, then as now, was nothing if not literary, and a poetical friend does him but justice in thus alluding to his Washington medal, his forest costume and the stately carriage which the chieftain still gallantly sustained:

"Thy garb—though Austria's bosom-star would frighten That medal pale, as diamonds, the dark mine, And George the Fourth wore, in the dance at Brighton, A more becoming evening dress than thine. "Yet 'tis a brave one, scorning wind and weather. And fitted for thy couch on field and flood. As Rob Roy's tartans for the highland heather. Or forest green for England's Robin Hood. "Is strength a monarch's merit?—like a whaler's— Thou art as tall, as sinewy, and as strong As earth's first kings—the Argo's gallant sailors— Heroes in history, and gods in song. "Who will believe that, with a smile whose blessing Would, like the patriarch's, soothe a dying hour; With voice as low, as gentle, and caressing, As e'er won maiden's lip in moonlight bower "With look like patient Job's eschewing evil With motions graceful as a bird's in air Thou art in truth, the veriest devil That e'er clenched fingers in a captive's hair! "That in thy veins there springs a poison fountain, Deadlier than that which bathes the Upas tree; And in thy wrath a nursing cat o' mountain Is calm as her babe's sleep compared to thee! "And underneath that face, like summer's oceans— Its lip as moveless, and its cheek as clear— Slumbers a whirlwind of the heart's emotions, Love, hatred, pride, hope, sorrow—all, save fear. "Love—for thy land, as if she were thy daughter; Her pipes in peace, her tomahawk in wars; Hatred of missionaries and cold water; Pride—in thy rifle-trophies and thy scars; "Hope—that thy wrongs will be by the Great Spirit Remembered and revenged when thou art gone; Sorrow—that none are left thee to inherit Thy name, thy fame, thy passions and thy throne."

This poet is not the only civilized authority who noticed that Red Jacket possessed personal attractions which greatly aided his forensic success, for one of the most distinguished public men of the State of New York was wont to say

that the chieftain reminded him strongly of the celebrated John Randolph, of Roanoke, in his best estate, and that these two were the only orators of nature he had ever heard or seen. In the last stanza quoted is an allusion to the melancholy domestic circumstances of the subject of them. He had been—according to Thatcher—the father of thirteen children, during his lifetime, and had buried them all. Some time after this visit to the Atlantic cities, he was invited to the launching of a schooner which was named after him. He christened the vessel with a short speech. "You have a great name given to you," said he, addressing the ship, "strive to deserve it. Be brave and daring. Go boldly into the great lakes and fear neither the swift wind nor the strong waves. Be not frightened nor overcome by them, for it is in resisting storms and tempest that I, whose name you bear, obtained my renown. Let my great example inspire you to courage and lead you to glory."

Of the domestic character and habits of the great Indian orator we know, of course, very little. It has not been the custom of civilized or so-called Christian people to relate much concerning the home life of eminent Indians. We know, however, that Red Jacket separated from his first wife after she had become the mother of several children, and that her infidelity was the alleged cause. The repugnance which he ever afterward manifested toward her is in accordance with his known moral purity of character.

Red Jacket married a second wife. She was the widow of a chief named Two Guns, and a woman of fine face and bearing. She became interested in Christianity, and thought of joining the church; whereupon Red Jacket was enraged. He said that they had lived happily together, but that now if she joined the party to which her husband was opposed, he would leave her. His wife, however, joined the church, and Red Jacket immediately left her and went to the other reservation. But he was not happy separated from those he loved, and those he left were not happy without him. He missed the caresses of the children, and especially the youngest daughter, of whom he was very fond. Through the agency of this little girl a reconciliation was effected. He even promised that he would never again interfere with his wife's religious privileges, and to his credit be it said, he kept the promise.

The great orator was suddenly taken ill of cholera morbus in the council house, where he had gone that day dressed with more than ordinary care, with all his gay apparel and ornaments. When he returned he said to his wife, "I am sick; I could not stay till the council had finished. I shall never recover." He then took off all his rich costume and laid it carefully away; reclined himself upon his couch and did not rise again till morning, or speak except to answer some slight question. His wife prepared him medicine which he patiently took, but said, "It will do no good. I shall die." The next day he called her to him, and requested her and the little girl he loved so much, to sit beside him, and listen to his parting words.

"I am going to die," he said. "I shall never leave the house again alive. I wish to thank you for your kindness to me. You have loved me. You have always prepared my food and taken care of my clothes, and been patient with me. I am sorry I ever treated you unkindly. I am sorry I left you, because of your new religion, and I am convinced that it is a good religion and has made you a better woman, and wish you to persevere in it. I should like to have lived a little longer for your sake. I meant to build you a new house and make you more comfortable, but it is now too late. But I hope my daughter will remember what I have often told her—not to go in the streets with strangers or improper persons. She must stay with her mother, and grow up a respectable woman.

"When I am dead it will be noised abroad through all the world—they will hear of it across the great waters, and say, 'Red Jacket, the great orator, is dead.' And white men will come and ask you for my body. They will wish to bury me. But do not let them take me. Clothe me in my simplest dress put on my leggings and my moccasins, and hang the cross which I have worn so long, around my neck, and let it lie upon my bosom. Then bury me among my people. Neither do I wish to be buried with Pagan rites. I wish the ceremonies to be as you like, according to the customs of your new religion if you choose. Your minister says the dead will rise. Perhaps they will. If they do, I wish to rise with my old comrades. I do not wish to rise among pale-faces. I wish to be surrounded by red men. Do not make a feast according to the customs of the Indians. Whenever my friends chose, they could come and feast with me when I was well, and I do not wish those who have never eaten with me in my cabin to surfeit at my funeral feast."

When he had finished, he laid himself again upon the couch and did not rise again. He lived several days, but was most of the time in a stupor, or else delirious. He often asked for Mr. Harris, the missionary, and afterward would unconsciously mutter—"I do not hate him—he thinks I hate him, but I do not. I would not hurt him." The missionary was sent for repeatedly, but he did not return till the chieftain was dead. When the messenger told him Mr. Harris had not come, he replied, "Very well. The Great Spirit will order it as he sees best, whether I have an opportunity to speak with him." Again he would murmur, "He accused me of being a snake, and trying to bite somebody. This was very true, and I wish to repent and make satisfaction."

Whether it was Mr. Harris that he referred to all the time he was talking in this way could not be ascertained, as he did not seem to comprehend if any direct question was put to him, but from his remarks, and his known enmity to him, this was the natural supposition.

The cross which he wore was a very rich one, of stones set in gold, and very large; it was given to him, but by whom his friends never knew. This was all the ornament which he requested should be buried with him.

It certainly was very remarkable that Red Jacket, after a life of sworn enmity to so-called Christianity, should be so influenced by the unobtrusive example of his wife, as to recant Pagan rites and request white men's burial. But such was undoubtedly the case, as we are informed by Minnie Myrtle, who spent much time among the Iroquois, especially the Senecas, and got her information concerning "the closing scene" from the sachem's favorite stepdaughter.

The wife and daughter were the only ones to whom he spoke parting words or gave a parting blessing; but as his last hour drew nigh, his family all gathered around him, and mournful it was to think that the children were not his own —his were all sleeping in the little churchyard where he was soon to be laid— they were his stepchildren—the children of his favorite wife. It has been somewhere stated that his first wife died before him, but this is a mistake; she was living at the time of his death.

His last words were still, "Where is the missionary?" He then clasped the little girl, whom he loved so devotedly, to his bosom; while she sobbed in anguish her ears caught his hurried breathing—his arms relaxed their hold—she looked up, and he was gone. There was mourning in the household, and there was mourning among the people. The orator, the great man of whom they were still proud, while they lamented his degeneracy, was gone. He had been a true though mistaken friend, and who would take his place?

All his requests were complied with strictly. The funeral took place in the little mission church, with appropriate but most simple ceremonies. In these the Pagans took but little interest. Wrapped in profound and solemn thought, they, however, waited patiently their termination. Some of them then arose, and successively addressed their countrymen in their own language. They recounted the exploits and the virtues of him whose remains they were now about to bear to his last home. They remembered his own prophetic appeal —"Who shall take my place among my people?" They thought of the ancient glory of their nation, and they looked around them on its miserable remnant. The contrast made their hearts sick, and tears trickled down their cheeks. Well might they weep! The strong warrior's arm was mouldering into dust, and the eye of the gifted orator was cold and motionless forever.

The last council he attended he recommended to both parties among his people, the so-called Christian and Pagan, that they should resolve to quarrel no more, but each man believe according, to his own way. In his last public speech to his people he said: "I am about to leave you, and when I am gone, and my warning shall no longer be heard or regarded, the craft and avarice of the white man will prevail. Many winters have I breasted the storm, but I am an aged tree and can stand no longer. My leaves are fallen, my branches are withered, and I am shaken by every breeze. Soon my aged trunk will be prostrate, and the foot of the exulting foe of the Indian may be placed upon it in safety; for I have none who will be able to avenge such an indignity.

Think not I mourn for myself. I go to join the spirits of my fathers, where age can not come; but my heart fails me when I think of my people, who are so soon to be scattered and forgotten."

In less than nine years after his death "the craft and avarice of the white man" had prevailed, as he predicted, and "every foot of the ancient inheritance of the Senecas was ceded to the white man, in exchange for a tract west of the Mississippi." Through the intervention of the Friends, however, this calamity was averted, and for the first and only time, the Indians recovered their land after it had been fraudulently obtained. Red Jacket was buried in the little mission burying ground, at the gateway of what was once an old fort. A simple stone was erected to mark his grave, and the spot became a resort for travelers from far and near.

The following inscription was cut on his tombstone:

SA-GO-YE-WAT-HA,
THE KEEPER AWAKE. RED JACKET,
CHIEF OF THE WOLF TRIBE OF THE SENECAS.
Died, Jan. 20, 1830. Aged, 78 years.

His headstone was desecrated by relic-hunting vandals, until his name disappeared from the marble.

Some among those who knew and honored him, wished to remove his remains to the new cemetery at Buffalo. They even caused him to be disinterred and placed in a leaden coffin, preparatory to a second burial. But ere their desire was accomplished, his family had heard of what they considered the terrible sacrilege, and immediately demanded that he should be given up. They had removed from the Buffalo to the Cattaraugus reservation, and therefore did not wish to bury him again in the mission churchyard, so they brought his precious dust to their own dwelling, where for many years it remained unburied. They almost felt as if he would rise up to curse them, if they allowed him to lie side by side with those he so cordially hated. He did not wish to rise with pale-faces, whom he considered the despoilers of his people, nor to mingle his red dust with that of his white foes. Recently a splendid monument, surmounted by a statue of the great Seneca orator, has been erected in the beautiful city of Buffalo.

RED JACKET PRESENTING A BUCK TO THE DELEGATION FROM PHILADELPHIA.

NEW YORK
RED JACKET
NEAR THIS SPOT STOOD
CABIN HOME OCCUPIED BY
PARENTS OF NOTED SENECA
CHIEF RED JACKET, 1752.
HIS MOTHER'S GRAVE IS HERE.
STATE EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT 1932
Photo Credit: H.N. Fritzke Jr
NYHistoric.com

RED JACKET
SA-GO-YE-WAT-HA
(HE-KEEPS-THEM-AWAKE)
DIED AT BUFFALO CREEK
JANUARY 20, 1830
AGED 78 YEARS
ERECTED BY
THE BUFFALO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
1884
GA-NON-DA-GE
DESTROY-TOWN.
OH-EN-CWAH-TOH
THE YOUNG KING.
SA-GO-YE-WAT-HA
RED JACKET.
DIED JAN. 20, 1830.
AGED 78 YEARS.

## About the Author

**Larry W Jones is a songwriter, having penned over 7,700 song lyrics. Published in 22 volumes of island themed, country, cowboy, western and bluegrass songs. The entire assemblage is the world's largest collection of lyrics written by an individual songwriter.**

**As a wrangler on the "Great American Horse Drive", at age 68, he assisted in driving 800 half-wild horses 62 miles in two days, from Winter pasture grounds in far NW Colorado to the Big Gulch Ranch outside of Craig Colorado.**

**His book, "The Oldest Greenhorn", chronicles the adventures and perils in earning the "Gate-to-Gate" trophy belt buckle the hard way.**

## Other books published by Larry W Jones:

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**The Painting Of A Dream**
**The Boy With Green Thumbs and The Wild Tree Man**
**Red Cloud – Chief Of the Sioux**
**Spotted Tail – The Orphan Negotiator**
**Little Crow – The Fur Trapper's Patron**
**Chief Gall – The Strategist**
**Crazy Horse – The Vision Quest Warrior**
**Sitting Bull - The Powder River Power**
**Rain-In-The-Face – The Setting Sun Brave**
**Two Strike – The Lakota Club Fighter**
**Chief American Horse – The Oglala Councilor**
**Chief Dull Knife – The Sharp-Witted Cheyenne**
**Chief Joseph – Retreat From Grande Ronde**
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**Kids In Bloom Volume 1**
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**The Jungle Book – The White Seal**
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